



ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAM PLANNER

STUDY GUIDE **16-1743-C1**

CONTENTS

1.....	Test Structure
1.....	Phase I, Written Work Sample
3.....	Phase II, Oral Presentation
4.....	Introduction to Civil Service Testing
6.....	Taking Different Types of Examinations
9.....	Dealing With Speech Anxiety

If after reading this study guide you have questions about the Health Education Program Planner Exam, please call Barbara Crawford at (614) 645-8248.

Health Education Program Planner

Health Education Program Planners are employed in various sections within the Columbus Health Department, such as Environmental Health, Cardiovascular Health, Immunizations, and Sexually Transmitted Diseases. Employees in this classification are responsible for planning, organizing and implementing public health programs and promotions. Health Education Program Planners are responsible for presenting health programs and promotions to specific groups of people.

For the Health Education Program Planner examination, there will be a Written Work Sample and an Oral Presentation, each worth 50% of the total score. **In order to receive a score for this examination, applicants must complete both phases.**

Phase I, Written Work Sample (50%)

This phase of testing will evaluate you on three main skill sets, *Planning and Organizing*, *Information Analysis*, and *Written Communication*.

Planning and Organizing is the ability to establish an appropriate course of action to accomplish a specific goal; to organize and utilize the available staff and material resources to maximum benefit; to set priorities and coordinate or schedule tasks or events in a logical manner; to anticipate problems, take steps to alleviate problems, and be proactive.

Information Analysis is the ability to separate relevant from irrelevant information; to determine the suitability of information; to conduct investigations, surveys, opinion polls, or other research to gather necessary information; to review and evaluate information based on program goals and objectives; to make logical conclusions from information obtained from programs; to identify problems and develop alternative solutions to those problems.

Written Communication is the ability to express thoughts in writing in an organized, clear, and logical manner; to use appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure.

For this examination, the candidate will be given a list of health-related topics upon which the written work sample will be based. Each candidate will be asked to complete the work sample as if he/she were in the classification, performing the actual work of a Health Education Program Planner.

The following are examples of typical programs or promotions for which Health Education Program Planners may be responsible. Some, but not all of these topics will be included on the list supplied to you on the day of the written examination. You will only be allowed to choose one topic from that list for the subject of your written work sample.

1. Tobacco Prevention
2. Healthy Home Environments
3. Sexually Transmitted Diseases
4. Nutrition
5. Cardiovascular Health
6. Sex Education In Schools
7. Food Safety Within The Home
8. Childhood Immunizations
9. Neighborhood Cleanup
10. Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In preparation for this test, you are encouraged to think through these topics. Keep in mind that you will give your oral presentation in Phase II on the same topic you choose for this written work sample.

During the exam, you will not be given access to the internet or reference materials, nor are you permitted to bring in any notes or materials. You are not expected to provide highly detailed information about reference materials, statistics, etc., that require detailed research. However, broad, generalized statements will not receive full credit. For example, stating “My program will be directed at school age children” is a broad statement given the fact that the range of school age children is from kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Phase II, Oral Presentation (50%)

This phase of testing will evaluate you on two main skill sets, *Oral Communication* and *Interpersonal Relations*.

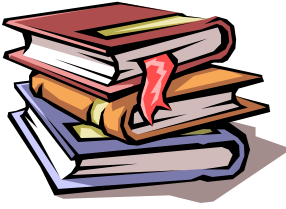
Oral Communication is the ability to organize thoughts and present them in a clear and logical manner; quickly comprehend another's meaning; use appropriate vocabulary, correct grammar and appropriate non-verbal communication (gestures, etc.); speak clearly with the appropriate volume, speed and tone; listen and answer directly.

Interpersonal Relations is the ability to establish and maintain cooperative and constructive relationships with others; consider the feelings and needs of others; respect the opinions and views of others; show respect and understanding to individuals of diverse backgrounds, cultures and economic climates; provide counseling advice when appropriate.

The oral examination will be a presentation of the material you submitted in the written work sample. When you arrive for this phase of the exam, you will be given a copy of the written work sample you submitted in Phase I and scrap paper. You will have thirty (30) minutes to prepare your presentation.

Candidates will present before three panel members. The panel will rate applicants on oral communication and interpersonal relations. The presentations will last approximately fifteen (15) minutes and will be timed. Each panel member will rate the applicant on both dimensions. Panel members will be given five minutes at the end of the presentation to ask the candidate questions to clarify information presented.

Upon completion of the oral presentation, all written materials must be turned in to the monitor. After completion of the examination, you should decline to answer any questions you may be asked by other candidates. Giving information to others may not only lower your position on the eligible list, but it is also grounds for disqualification. You will receive detailed instructions for both phases of the examination on your scheduled test date.



INTRODUCTION TO CIVIL SERVICE TESTING

REASONS FOR TESTING

Often, someone interested in City employment will ask: “Why do I have to take a test?” Few are aware that the Ohio Constitution and the Columbus City Charter give the Civil Service Commission the responsibility for maintaining a competitive testing system. Testing requires applicants to demonstrate their qualifications. Further, the test provides a mechanism for assessing how an individual candidate performs relative to other applicants. The testing system helps ensure that the City hires a work force capable of delivering quality services to the citizens of Columbus.

PROVISIONAL EMPLOYEES

Employees who are not hired from an eligible list are considered provisional. By law, these appointments are only temporary until the Commission administers a test for that job. Upon accepting a provisional appointment, applicants read and sign a notice explaining the requirement to take the exam when offered. If the provisional employees have completed their probationary period, they have preferred status on resulting eligible lists. This means that the preferred employees are placed on a separate list, which is used before the open competitive list.

TYPES OF EXAMINATIONS

There are several types of examinations used by the Civil Service Commission.

The **Multiple-Choice** examination is the most common and the most recognized. Candidates are presented with questions covering general knowledge areas such as reading comprehension, or logic and reasoning, as well as job-specific areas such as carpentry, safety procedures, or traffic maintenance.

The **Written Work Sample** is an examination that illustrates the type of work performed by an incumbent in the class being tested. The work simulation may include prioritizing items commonly encountered during the workday, and writing letters, memos, or reports. Candidates are given all the necessary information and then record their answers on the computer.

The **Oral Presentation** will be the second phase of the Health Education Program Planner examination. The oral exam will consist of a presentation designed to test for abilities and skills identified as important for this job, such as oral communication skills and interpersonal skills.

EXAMINATION RESULTS

After the grading of a competitive examination has been completed, all candidates tested will be notified in writing of their final grade and relative position on the eligible list. Please do not call the Civil Service Commission for your test results as this information cannot be given over the phone. Results are usually produced two to three weeks after completion of the examination.

ELIGIBLE LISTS

After the completion of each open competitive examination, two types of lists are prepared:

A preferred eligible list includes the names of all provisional employees currently in the tested class who received a final passing grade and who satisfactorily completed the probationary period as of the date the list is established.

An open eligible list includes the names of all other applicants who received a final passing grade.

The names of the eligible candidates on the preferred or open eligible list will be arranged in the order of the final ranking based on test grades earned. The preferred eligible list is used before the open list.

Grade Banding

Final scores on competitive eligible lists are placed in ten-point fixed bands. Final scores will be placed in these bands:

Band 1: 90 and above
Band 2: 80-89
Band 3: 70-79

Veteran's Preference Points

Five points will be added to the final passing grade of each qualified veteran on an open competitive examination who is approved for veteran's preference. Ten points will be added to the final passing grade of each qualified disabled veteran on an open competitive examination who is approved for veteran's preference. (Veterans preference points can only be used for one appointment.) Applicants must provide appropriate documentation during the filing period in order to gain veteran's preference points.



TAKING DIFFERENT TYPES OF EXAMINATIONS

WRITTEN WORK SAMPLES

Your score for this type of test is determined only by the information you provide on the written work sample. You will not be able to add or change any information once the exam has been submitted to the monitor at the testing site. The following tips may help you get proper credit for this written examination.

1. Read all instructions carefully. Pay attention to the skill definitions that relate to the classification being tested.
2. Provide all relevant information as it relates to the topic you have chosen. Be sure to answer the question that is being asked. Do not assume that the raters have information relating to the topic. Do not use language specific to a location or work specialty, such as initials, abbreviations or military jargon.
3. Describe specific duties and responsibilities that demonstrate your qualifications for the job. Do not write in vague, general terms.
4. Review all your written work before turning the completed written work sample in to the monitor. You will be graded on content, clarity of thought, logical presentation of work, as well as punctuation, spelling, word usage, grammar, etc.

ORAL EXAMINATIONS

The oral exam process allows candidates to demonstrate their oral communication and interpersonal skills, and gives the panel of experts the opportunity to evaluate the degree to which candidates possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for successful job performance.

Oral Exam Scoring Dimensions

1. ORAL COMMUNICATION

Oral Communication has two basic components: the ability to make one's thoughts or ideas understood by others, and the ability to understand thoughts or ideas expressed by others.

Oral Communication involves the ability to organize thoughts and express them in a clear and logical manner, to comprehend another's meaning, and to use appropriate vocabulary and correct grammar. It also involves the ability to listen and accurately comprehend what others are saying or asking. Candidates are encouraged to listen carefully to the questions, to speak slowly and distinctly, to enunciate clearly, and to avoid mumbling, rushing, or rambling.

Examples of Good Performance:

- Expresses ideas clearly and concisely
- Presents an organized response to the topic
- Listens carefully to questions
- Answers questions completely and precisely

Examples of Poor Performance

- Contradicts self or previous statements
- Talks too long without making a point
- Fails to listen to questions asked by raters
- Responds to only portions of questions

2. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

Interpersonal Relations has two basic components: the ability to work with other individuals in a cooperative and constructive manner, and the ability to consider and respect the feelings, needs, and viewpoints of others.

Candidates should be able to talk to others in a manner that is not demeaning or arrogant, thus establishing positive relationships. However, having good interpersonal ability does not mean being non-assertive or indecisive.

Examples of Good Performance:

- Conveys empathy and respect
- Remains open and sensitive
- Asks questions and elicits information without being judgmental or condescending

Examples of Poor Performance

- Approaches others with disdain or arrogance
- Asks questions in an accusatory tone
- Adopts a condescending attitude
- Becomes defensive

Oral Exam Preparation Strategies

1. Do not put any unnecessary information into your answers. Be clear and concise. You only have a limited time, so do not waste time on trivial or unrelated points.
2. Review the information on scoring dimensions and become familiar with the knowledge, skills, and abilities important to this classification.
3. Organize your thoughts before you begin to speak.
4. Speak slowly and distinctly during your presentation. Do not mumble or speak too softly to be understood. When people are nervous, they tend to speak quickly, so make a concerted effort to slow down.
5. Don't use words unless you know their meaning. A high score will not depend on how many big words you use.
6. Don't wander or repeat yourself.
7. If you feel comfortable with the information you have presented before time has expired, don't feel that you have to fill up the time remaining.



DEALING WITH SPEECH ANXIETY

Speech anxiety is an inability to think clearly regarding or during a presentation or interview that prevents you from doing your best. It is usually characterized by feelings of nervousness, fear or dread and specific symptoms include insomnia, loss (or increase) of appetite, and an inability to concentrate. During a speech, symptoms include confusion, increased heart rate, dry mouth, panic, mental blocks, or nausea. These symptoms are normal reactions and subside within a short time. Do you ever experience any of these symptoms before or during a presentation or interview? If so, you are not alone; many people suffer from speech anxiety.

Following are some techniques for dealing with speech anxiety. However, first you need to understand that speech anxiety, just like most other forms of anxiety, comes about because of what you tell yourself, and your innermost thoughts regarding the speech and your abilities. Irrational beliefs regarding fear of failure, concerns regarding what others will think about you, and the need to be perfect come into play. Some speech anxiety techniques to try are as follows:

THOUGHT SUBSTITUTION

Start substituting the negative thoughts and feelings that you have regarding the presentation with positive thoughts. For example, instead of telling yourself, "I'm never going to do well in this presentation because I'm not a good speaker," you can substitute that thought with a more positive one such as "I have control over whether or not I do well. I am well qualified for the job and I will do the best I can." Making positive statements to yourself is one way to reduce the anxiety that you feel. View the interview as an opportunity to share information with a group of people who are interested in what you have to say. Also, use your preparation time wisely so that you can be confident that you know the material.

BREATHING

If, before the presentation, you find yourself starting to develop some of the symptoms of speech anxiety, one technique you can use immediately is to focus your attention on your breathing. By doing this, you can calm some of the physical symptoms and sensations you may be having. Take several deep breaths. Hold each breath for 3-5 seconds, and then slowly exhale. You should feel yourself getting more relaxed and your heart rate slowing down. While you cannot do this during the oral presentation, you can pause briefly and take a deep breath before speaking.

MUSCLE RELAXATION

Another technique you can try before the testing situation is to tense and relax your muscles. If you are aware of a particularly tense part of your body, which is usually the shoulder area, you should first make the area even more tense. Pull your shoulders back, arch your back, and tense your shoulder muscles even more tightly and hold the tension for five seconds. Then slowly release it. You should begin to feel the tension floating away as you release. You can do this several times.

PREPARATION

If you are really uncomfortable in interview situations, you can deal with your fears by preparing for the interview. Go to the library and check out books on public speaking and interviewing. These books can give you some helpful strategies for dealing with speech anxiety as well as hints for preparing for interviews. The more prepared you are for a situation, the less anxious you will feel.

There are some other things that you should do before the exam to help reduce stress. If you already have an exercise routine, you should continue with your normal routine. Studies have shown that regular exercise helps to control tension and stress. The day before the exam you should check again the time and location of the exam to be sure you know how to get to the testing site. Try to get a full night's sleep that will help you feel refreshed and alert.

Then the day of the exam get up in plenty of time to avoid rushing, arrive at the exam site as early as possible and RELAX. By this time, you should be thinking positively about the outcome.

Thank you for your interest in employment with the City of Columbus. The Civil Service Commission hopes that the information provided in this study guide will aid you in applying for Civil Service employment and preparing for Civil Service examinations. If you should have any questions regarding job openings, please call our job line at (614) 645-7667.